

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 2285

LIMDIS

BANGKOK PASS CODEL MANSFIELD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, BM (MANSFIELD)

SUBJECT: CODEL MANSFIELD: SENATOR'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NE WIN

REF: RANGOON 2283

1. SENATOR AND MRS. MANSFIELD AND MR. VALEO DINED WITH PRESIDENT AND MRS. NE WIN EVENING AUGUST 10 AT PRESIDENT'S INVITATION. ALSO PRESENT WERE GENERAL AND MRS. SAN YU AND U THA TUN, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, ALTHOUGH NEITHER OF THE LATTER TWO CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE CONVERSATION. FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES HIGH POINTS OF THE CORDIAL AND UNUSUALLY LONG SESSION AS RELAYED TO US BY THE SENATOR AND MR. VALEO. UNFORTUNATELY, THE PRESIDENT'S ACCENT AND STYLE OF SPEECH LIMITED INTEL-LIGIBILITY OF SOME OF HIS COMMENTS. AS EXPECTED, HE TENDED TO MONOPOLIZE CONVERSATION.

2. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS - INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS DID NOT SEEM TO WEIGH HEAVILY ON NE WIN'S MIND AND WERE CITED PRINCIPALLY AS A JUSTIFICATION OF BURMA'S NEUTRALIST STANCE. HE DOES REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT BURMA'S GIANT NEIGHBORS, THE PRC AND INDIA ALTHOUGH HE EVIDENTLY BELIEVES THAT CHINA'S SUPPORT FOR THE BCP INSURGENCY IN THE NORTHEAST IS WANING. THE PRESIDENT CITED THE PROXIMITY OF

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THESE TWO DENSELY POPULATED COUNTRIES AS PLACING BURMA IN A DIL-

EMNA ON THE QUESTION OF POPULATION CONTROL; FAMILY PLANNING WAS IMPORTANT BECAUSE OF THE STRAINS THE GROWING POPULATION PLACES ON THE ECONOMY BUT ON THE OTHER HAND BURMA MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY POPULATED TO DISCOURAGE INCURSIONS BY THE NEIGHBORING POWERS. ON A POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP WITH ASEAN, NE WIN INDICATED HE REMAINS DUBIOUS ABOUT SINCERITY OF COOPERATIVE SPIRIT AMONG ITS MEMBERSHIP. INTERESTINGLY, HE DID VOICE CONCERN ABOUT THE RESURGENCY OF JAPAN IN ASIAN AFFAIRS, EVIDENTLY HAVING IN MIND MORE THAN ITS GROWING ECONOMIC DOMINANCE.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS - PRESIDENT SHOWED AWARENESS OF BURMA'S CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BUT OFFERED LITTLE IN A WAY OF SOLUTIONS. HE SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME REHASHING BURMESE DISPUTES WITH THE OLD U.S. AID PROGRAM. HE DID NOT RAISE THE ISSUE OF THE PROPOSED IBRD/IMF CONSORTIUM FOR BURMA ALTHOUGH FINANCE MINISTER U LWIN DISCUSSED THIS WITH THE CHARGE' AT THE AUGUST 8 DINNER FOR CODEL: U LWIN WAS ADVISED OF U.S. POSITION ALONG LINES OF STATE 18/47#. NE WIN INDICATED CONSIDERABLE OPTIMISM ABOUT ONSHORE AND OFFSHORE PETROLEUM EXPLORATION NOW UNDERWAY IN BURMA; HE ALSO NOTED THAT MINERAL EXPLOITATION WOULD NOT BE EXPANDED SIGNIFICANTLY UNTIL BURMA HAS SUFFICIENT SMELTING CAPACITY TO PROCESS ORE ON ITS OWN. ON RECONSTRUCTION WORK OF EARTHQUAKE DAMAGED TEMPLES AT PAGAN, PRESIDENT INDICATED THAT ANY CONTRIBUTIONS WE MIGHT MAKE SHOULD BE IN CONTEXT OF PAGAN AS NATIONAL CULTURAL CENTER RATHER THAN AS A RELIGIOUS SHRINE, (BANGKOK 16538).

4. NARCOTICS - NE WIN REITERATED GUB'S COMMITMENT TO INTERDICT ILLICIT NARCOTICS TRADE. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE HAD AT FIRST OPPOSED USG HELICOPTER PACKAGE SINCE HE FELT FOOT SOLDIERS AIDED BY GOOD INTELLIGENCE (WHICH HE NOW BELIEVES BURMA ARMY HAS) MORE EFFECTIVE IN COMBATTING TRAFFICKING. HOWEVER, "YOUNGER OFFICERS" PREVAILED UPON HIM TO ACCEPT HELICOPTERS AND THE MOBILITY THAT THEY WOULD OFFER BURMA ARMY. CODEL HAD IMPRESSION PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN THE ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN SINCERE.

5. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: NE WIN APPEARED TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH AND SPIRITS ALTHOUGH HE DID COMPLAIN OF ARTHRITIC PAIN; HE REPORTEDLY REFUSES ACUPUNCTURE AS PART OF TREATMENT BECAUSE OF ITS CHINESE ORIGIN. CODEL NOTED NE WIN HAD AGED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE LAST VISIT SIX YEARS AGO AND THAT HE NOW WEARS GLASSES ALL THE

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TIME. NONETHELESS, HE SEEMED VERY SELF-ASSURED AND IN CONTROL; THERE WERE NO HINTS THAT HE MIGHT BE CONSIDERING RETIREMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE. NE WIN DID INDICATE HE REMAINS INTERESTED IN THE ROLE OF THE U.S. IN ASIA AND EVIDENTLY WELCOMED SENATOR MANSFIELD'S VISIT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE THIS INTEREST. HOWARTH

NOTE BY OC/T: (#)AS RECEIVED.

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